

SEATTLE STATION AREA PLANNING PROGRAM

close-out report

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Partner with SHA
on New Holly Phase 3
City of Seattle



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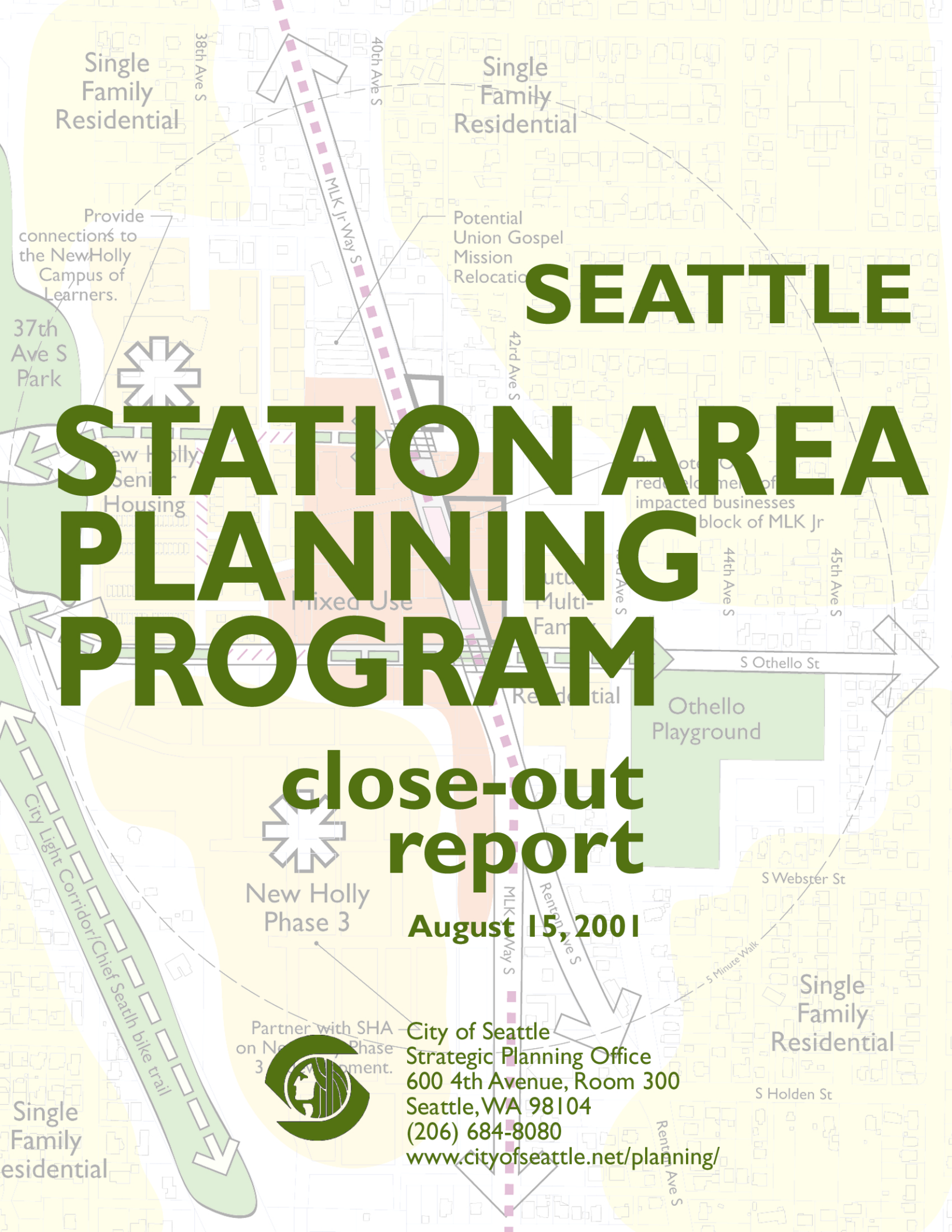


Table of Contents

Program Overview

What is this Report?	3
A Vision for Light Rail in Seattle	3
Telling Our Story	4
SAP Program Resources	5
The City/Sound Transit Interlocal Agreement	5
Staffing and Consultants	6
Other City/Sound Transit Activities	7

The SAP Two Step: 1997-2001

SAP Phase 1: Background Research and Planning Fundamentals, 1997-1999	8
Phase 1 Goals and Strategies	9
Phase 1 Accomplishments	9
Steps in the Process	9
Phase 1 Products Included on Closeout Report CD	10
SAP Phase 2: Where Staff Does the Heavy Lifting, 1999-2001	11
Phase 2 Goals and Strategies	11
Phase 2 Accomplishments	11
Steps in the Process	12
Phase 2 Products Included on Closeout Report CD	17

SAP Milestones	18
-----------------------	----

Summary of Outreach Activities	19
---------------------------------------	----

Lessons Learned	20
------------------------	----



Seattle Station Area Planning Program Overview

What is this Report?

This report documents the City of Seattle Station Area Planning (SAP) Program, a four year effort initiated in 1997 led by City staff to engage city departments, community representatives and partner agencies in planning and development work for the ¼ mile around the proposed light rail stations. An overview of SAP, warts and all, follows and is complemented by the program's major graphic and written materials. They accompany this report on CD ROM, and together, they tell our story.

This report is organized around the two phases of the program. The products completed in each phase are described in the respective sections of this report.

The SAP program involved many people including city staff, community members, developers and the financial community, consultants and elected officials. Each would likely have a different version of the SAP story. What you will find on the following pages is an account of the SAP program from the perspective of SAP team members.

You can also access this report and many of our SAP products on our website at:
www.cityofseattle.net/planning/homesap.htm.

A Vision for Light Rail in Seattle

In 1996, Puget Sound voters in three counties approved the Sound Move plan and in doing so agreed to tax themselves to construct a new mass transit system. Over 65% of Seattle voters approved the Sound Move plan, at the heart of which is Sound Transit's Link light rail—a safe, reliable light rail system. Link light rail will have a phenomenal impact on Seattle and the region. The first phase of light rail will run from SeaTac to downtown Seattle and will serve as the backbone for mass transit in Seattle. It's a major step in developing a regional transportation system, and will set the stage for future investment and expansion of mass transit to other parts of the Puget Sound region.

The SAP effort builds on the work completed as part of Seattle's 1994 Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Planning program. From 1995 to 1999, 37 Seattle neighborhoods engaged in neighborhood planning to create visions for the future of their communities as part of 20 year plans to implement the visions. All of the neighborhoods through which Link Light Rail will pass anticipated the system; some in more detail than others. Their visions provide a blueprint for Seattle's future and their neighborhood plans set the stage for SAP work. SAP provided a forum for City staff, neighborhood groups and our partner agencies (Sound Transit, King County and the Puget Sound Regional Council) to develop a set of design, development and land use actions for each station area to create the fit between light rail and neighborhoods.



SAP helps achieve growth management goals within the City of Seattle and the region. In 1990, the Central Puget Sound adopted a regional land use/transportation plan, *Vision 2020*, which envisioned mixed-use urban centers connected by high capacity transit. The City's Comprehensive Plan, completed under the provisions of the State of Washington's Growth Management Act (1990), built upon that vision by electing to accommodate growth in a mixture of high density urban centers and pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban villages throughout the city. The

planned light rail alignment serves four of Seattle's five designated urban centers, as well as several urban villages. Three of the urban centers served by the alignment are also the three most dense employment centers in the state (downtown Seattle, First Hill, and the University District). Consistent with these adopted growth management policies, Station Area Planning supports the development of dense, walkable, mixed-use urban centers that are well served by public transit.

Telling Our Story

Station area planning is not an exact science. At the City of Seattle, we set forth to accomplish a number of land use, design and development objectives to make the most of the light rail investment in Seattle's neighborhoods. Community involvement needed to be a central element of our work, as did making strong partnerships among City departments and our partner agencies, Sound Transit and King County. From the outset of SAP, the team realized that it was critical to tell the station area planning story so that it is accessible, informative and easy to understand. Many of the planning, development, design and land use concepts that might typically comprise a SAP program are not straightforward and often geared towards technical audiences. Our goal was to create a consistent message and communicate it effectively through clear presentation materials, graphics, and seizing all opportunities to get the word out about SAP.

One example of this strategy is the newsletters produced in advance of major public meetings and workshops. Newsletters were produced for each of four geographic areas. They advertised upcoming SAP meetings and were mailed to all residents, property owners and businesses within one half mile of the proposed light rail station locations and included detailed project information, timelines, and graphics. The newsletters provided enough information so that many people could have their questions answered without attending the announced meetings. If the newsletters did not answer a specific question or concern, people could contact SAP staff in advance of the meeting, giving them the option to attend or not. If they were still interested in attending the meeting, they did so with full knowledge of the agenda and topics to be covered. This helped keep meetings on track. This philosophy remained consistent throughout the life of the SAP program, even though our process and, to some extent, the focus of the program evolved dramatically over a four year period.

SAP Program Resources

The scope of Seattle's station area planning program grew and evolved in response to changes around it. A number of key resource decisions were made early on in the process that contributed to the flexibility and therefore the success of SAP.

The City/Sound Transit Interlocal Agreement

Accepting an unsolicited proposal generated by City staff, Sound Transit funded a City effort to do land use planning, TOD policy development and program groundwork in advance of light rail final design or construction. Sound Transit committed \$2.5 million over a multi-year term for the City proposed SAP scope. Council authorized an Interlocal Agreement ([Ordinance # 118927](#), April 1998) with Sound Transit and accepted funds so that City could add staff and conduct the Station Area Planning program. This arrangement made sense to both parties, since the City regulates land use, street design and street use.

Sound Transit had several motivations to invest in Seattle's SAP program. First, both the State's Growth Management Act and the High Capacity Transit Act of 1991 spoke to integrated growth management and high capacity transit system planning. Second, Sound Transit's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) phase commenced when Seattle's Neighborhood Planning program was in high gear, and capitalizing on that momentum provided Sound Transit a ready and major audience for the Link Light Rail project. Most of all, to compete well with other Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts-funded projects, Sound Transit would need to demonstrate sophisticated and well-developed land use compatibility. SAP consistently provided this to Sound Transit's benefit.

Milestones for Interlocal Payments

The Interlocal Agreement specifies the scope and schedule of SAP deliverables upon which Sound Transit compensated the City. The five SAP progress milestones for payment were:

1. Approval of SAP Work Plan
2. Completion of Market Analysis
3. Completion of City's review and comments on Sound Transit's Draft Environmental Impact Statement
4. Completion of Station Area Plans
5. Following City Council Implementing Actions

The adoption of the Station Area Overlay Districts and Rezones in July 2001 comprises the final deliverable under the City/Sound Transit Interlocal Agreement for SAP.

In addition to the deliverables articulated in the Interlocal Agreement, the City provided intensive, ongoing, professional staff to affected communities to deal with the full complement of Link project development issues--considerably beyond Station Area Planning. Providing this service with respect to Link issues (aside from station area planning) was not explicated in the Interlocal Agreement. The extent to which it served a critical need to address basic light rail issues limited the capacity of SAP to achieve its central objectives. Subsequent Interlocal Agreements address rail project design review, impact community support services and permitting activities by the City.

Staffing and Consultants

In 1997, the SAP team had three members in the Strategic Planning Office, as well as citywide inter-departmental teams that reviewed and contributed to the products completed in 1997-1998. This staff was responsible for all aspects of SAP. The program was launched predicated on a major contribution of consultant effort to develop technical data and graphic materials more than depending on city staff to complete these tasks.

A [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) was advertised in Winter 1997-98 for consultants with technical expertise in market forecasting and analysis, land use planning, urban design and community involvement to assist the SAP team and complete certain portions of the work specified by the Interlocal Agreement. The City entered into a contract agreement with the consultant team to develop demographic information, market analysis, and neighborhood profiles. This effort yielded the station area atlas and background report (including TOD case studies, developer focus group findings, and stakeholder interviews. See *SAP Phase 1, Products*).

In late 1998, the initial phase of the SAP program was complete and a second phase began. At this time, the project director decided to deepen the expertise of SAP staff who would manage station area planning efforts. This decision followed termination of the consultant team contract with completion of the contract's "Part A" scope. It created a City staff team with geographic area assignments who were charged with accomplishing program goals, involving community stakeholders, collaborating with other City departments and partner agencies, and laying appropriate groundwork for TOD in widely diverse station areas. By hiring station area planners with a range of complementary expertise, the SAP team did not rely as heavily on consultant expertise as in the initial phase of the program. Refocusing the program staff structure enabled City staff to use limited consultant funds where it made the most sense, to stay flexible with respect to changing conditions of the Sound Transit light rail project, and to work more efficiently with City decision-makers on policies and programs in ways that can encourage TOD in station areas.

The planners hired to work on the station area planning team each brought their own technical expertise to the program including land use planning, urban and streetscape design, economic development, housing, policy development and environmental issues. All had a history of working successfully with community groups on complex, highly visible and politically sensitive projects.

The team built upon the analysis completed in Phase 1 and the work accomplished by the city's just-completing neighborhood planning program. The SAP team recognized they were creating a program with few models to draw upon. There was no "departmental work plan," plenty of room for creativity, and the need for flexibility to respond to a constantly evolving light rail project.



In some cases, flexibility meant the ability to modify the SAP work plan as the program progressed. For example, the initial intent of hiring station area planners was for each planner to develop a plan for the station area. In light of the community work accomplished in neighborhood planning, the station area planners opted to refocus the work program and concentrate on orchestrating week long design and development workshops in each station area (see discussion of Design and Development Work Sessions under *SAP Phase 2, Steps in the Process*). The work accomplished in those sessions was the framework for station area “action packages” which, in turn, are the basis for the Council-Adopted Station Area Concept Level Recommendations and subsequent Land Use Code changes.

Other City departments were engaged in SAP activities including the Office of Economic Development, DCLU/CityDesign, SeaTran, Department of Neighborhoods, and the Office of Housing. In SAP Phase 1, the City’s Strategic Planning Office convened an SAP TOD Interdepartmental Team (SAP/TOD IDT). The purpose of this team was to contribute multi-disciplinary expertise to the station area planning endeavor. As the SAP program progressed into its second phase, the SAP/TOD IDT had a reduced role as the station area planners took responsibility for tasks on a geographic basis. A summary of department responsibilities is included later in this report under *SAP Phase 2, Steps in the Process*.

Other City/Sound Transit Activities Not Within the SAP Program Scope

The Light Rail Review Panel: In order to conduct a coordinated review of all design aspects of Sound Transit’s Link light rail system, a panel of experts from the Design, Arts and Planning Commissions joined forces in 1999. This consortium, called the Seattle Light Rail Review Panel (LRRP), developed a set of general design principles for Link Light Rail, augmented by design guidelines for specific stations and system elements. The LRRP reviews station designs as well as directing the development of Design Guidelines for Link Light Rail, which are intended to guide the City’s review of Link drawings during the permitting process.

The LRRP regularly reviews and advises the City and Sound Transit on the evolving designs for each Link station, the Link public art program, and project partnerships. LRRP’s multidisciplinary expertise and wide-ranging experience gives it the ability to address the Link system as a whole, while still attending to the review of specific elements. The Panel seeks creative ways to build design excellence into the core components of the system and to engage others in partnering with Sound Transit to fund elements of the project.

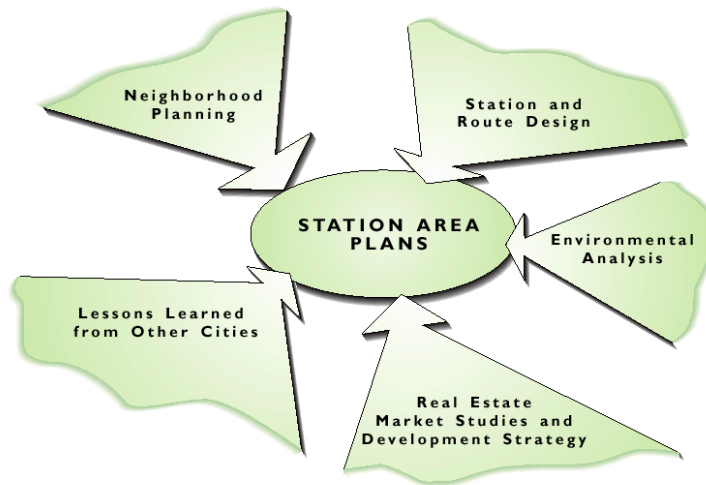
City Implementation Team: Sound Transit will need to obtain several different permits from the City of Seattle to construct the Link light rail system. Some of the light rail line lies within City street right-of-way, which is under Seattle Transportation Department (SeaTran) permitting purview; other portions are located outside the right-of-way on private or other public property, which is generally Department of Design, Construction and Land Use (DCLU) permitting purview. Permit issues vary depending on whether the line is in a tunnel, at-grade, or elevated. The City has organized a team of staff members from all departments that are involved in the permitting or implementation of the public works portion of the light rail project. This team includes SeaTran; DCLU; Seattle Public Utilities (SPU); Seattle City Light (SCL); Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR); Seattle Police Department (SPD) and the Seattle Fire Department (SFD). This team meets twice monthly to review Sound Transit design documents and troubleshoot issues among City departments or with Sound Transit staff, all significantly prior to permit applications. The City Implementation Team’s efforts are ongoing from final design review through the permitting and construction of Link Light Rail.

The SAP Two Step: 1997-2001

SAP Phase I: Background Research and Planning Fundamentals, 1997-1998

SAP Phase 1 as conceived in 1997 was intended to provide corridor and segment-level information on existing and future development prospects, real estate market conditions and the potential for change in station areas. SAP work in Phase 1 moved quickly, amassing a large quantity of demographic, land use and market data under quick deadlines in order to contribute to light rail project development, environmental review and preliminary engineering. SAP work included:

- 1) a review of neighborhood planning activities;
- 2) case studies of transit's influence on development in other cities;
- 3) public involvement strategies and technical assistance for certain neighborhood planning areas; and,
- 4) an assessment of station area opportunities and constraints and recommendations on a station-by-station basis.



Components of SAP, Phase I as envisioned in 1998.

Sketch by Dhyett & Bhatia

The completion of Phase 1 was marked by a number of significant products including the Land Use Impacts section of the Sound Transit Draft Environmental Impact Statement, a background report and station area profiles, the station area atlas, and council actions including adoption of the goals and framework policies and the passage of interim station area land use controls.

Phase I Goals

While Sound Transit is ultimately responsible for building and operating the light rail system, the City of Seattle wants to make sure that the best possible light rail system is built for our residents, workers, and visitors. The principles of City Council's adopted [Resolution](#) for light rail station areas are to:

- Encourage housing, commercial, and retail uses that support transit and generate pedestrian activity.
- Use urban design to enhance the community identity of station areas and make them attractive, safe, and convenient.
- Provide public facilities that encourage transit ridership.
- Create a safe environment around stations.
- Enhance the existing transportation network, support transit-oriented development, and promote good walking, bicycle, and transit connections.
- Promote economic vitality within station areas.

Phase I Accomplishments

Station area planning accomplished the following tasks to support achieving these goals, including:

- Generated market, land use and design information for neighborhoods along the proposed Light Rail alignments.
- Used this information as a basis to assess the opportunities for transit oriented development in each station area.
- Developed tangible planning tools (atlas, website, background report, and growth projections).
- Built on the work completed in comprehensive and neighborhood planning
- Focused actions on areas roughly a 5 minute walk from each proposed light rail station.
- Contribute to the Land Use sections of the Sound Transit Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) [New Starts Reports](#).

Steps in the Process

Agree to terms of City/Sound Transit Station Area Planning Interlocal Agreement. City Council adopted the terms of the Interlocal via [Ordinance #118927](#).

Establish the planning framework. Planners worked with neighborhood residents, property owners, and businesses around the proposed light rail stations to understand the market and neighborhood issues that may drive station area planning. Case studies of station area development in other cities were completed to so that Seattle planners and citizens could learn from others' experiences.

[Presentations](#) to Constituency Groups. SAP conducted "cold call" presentations to almost 20 major constituency groups to introduce them to the concepts of transit-oriented development and the objectives of the SAP program.

Establish Legislative groundwork for SAP. The Seattle City Council adopted [Resolution 29867](#) in December 1998. It established Framework Goals and Policies to articulate City policy on, and support for, transit-oriented development in station areas.

Adopt Interim Land Use Controls in Station Areas, Ordinance 119394, March 1999--passed the Station Area Interim Overlay District. As interim measures, the Overlay District prohibited new auto-oriented uses incompatible with transit-oriented development and revised parking standards within approximately one-quarter mile of proposed Sound Transit light rail stations. The intent of the interim measures was to preserve opportunities for transit oriented development in station areas consistent with the framework goals and policies while station area planning was underway. The boundaries and expiration date of interim measures were modified by [subsequent ordinances](#), and superceded in Phase 2 by final SAOD and rezones.

Phase I Products Included on the Closeout CD

The following information was originally produced for neighborhood organizations, the City's SAP/TOD IDT and Sound Transit's EIS team. It was subsequently used extensively in formulating Phase 2 concepts, options and recommendations.

- [Background Report](#) assesses demographic, land use and market issues in 34 locations. The Background Report also describes development opportunity sites and relative market strengths in each neighborhood.
- The [Station Area Atlas](#). A compilation of maps, photographs, land use, development trends and demographic information for 27 station options. Serves as a user-friendly version of the Background Report. The atlas, in its entirety, was included in the Sound Transit Board's Locally Preferred Alternative Briefing Book.
- [Transit-Oriented Development \(TOD\) Case Studies](#) includes 12 extensive case studies. Findings and TOD implementation tools are indicated for each case study. Case studies were prepared for the following cities: Portland, OR; Vancouver, BC; San Francisco Bay Area, CA (BART and Muni systems); San Jose, CA; Washington, DC; San Diego, CA; Atlanta, GA; Sacramento, CA and Los Angeles, CA.
- Generic [presentation script](#) and [boards](#) illustrating SAP and TOD concepts used by the SAP team for multiple presentations to community and other interest groups, elected officials and private sector groups.
- [Developer Focus Group Report](#) with key recommendations.
- [TOD Framework Goals and Policies](#) (Resolution # 29867). Council adopted policies on transit-oriented development in Seattle's proposed station areas.
- [City/Sound Transit Interlocal Agreement](#) (Ordinance # 118927). Terms of the interlocal agreement between the City and Sound Transit provide funds to complete SAP work program with specific deliverables. Unanimously passed by Seattle City Council.
- [Interim Land Use Controls](#) (Ordinance # 119394). Legislation that establishes standards and land use policy direction for new development in station areas consistent with the Framework Goals and Policies for the duration of the SAP program—to be replaced by a permanent Station Area Overlay District (Phase 2). Maps interim station area overlay districts.
- [SAP Brochure](#) to describe the SAP program. Distributed at community meetings and distribution points throughout the city.

SAP Phase 2: Where Staff Does the Heavy Lifting, 1999-2001

Phase 2 SAP focused on individual station areas and set out to make choices about specific planning and design options, consistent with neighborhood concerns and adopted plans. Phase 2 involved substantial public outreach and involvement in station area planning activities, including analysis of issues and planning options, development concepts, neighborhood workshops, City Council briefings, and preparation of City legislation and policies to encourage TOD.

Neighborhood planning produced comprehensive, broad-based plans for each of the 37 neighborhoods that participated. Station area planning focused on the station areas selected by the Sound Transit Board and formalized in the 1999 Locally Preferred Alternative. SAP Phase 2 further defined the planning ideas described in neighborhood plans, concentrating on smaller geographic areas (roughly a 5-minute walk from each station location). The SAP team worked with communities and City staff to evaluate physical planning concepts, develop TOD strategies and adopt Land Use Code revisions as needed. Station area planning developed specific actions to encourage TOD and also broad policy direction to give neighborhoods and elected officials information to guide decisions about light rail station areas in the future.

Station area planning meant something different in every neighborhood. In some, it involved finding assistance for a single desired project; in others, it includes new design guidance or Land Use Code revisions. Whatever the specific outcome in a particular neighborhood, station area planning helped community organizations, property owners, and businesses work together to make it happen.

Phase 2 Goals and Strategies

The City wants to encourage more people to ride transit. We want the transit system to improve the quality of life in Seattle, for those that live and work here now, and for the future. What happens around Seattle's new light rail stations is important for the future of our city and for making the most of our transit investment. The SAP team relied on the Seattle City Council adopted goals and strategies for light rail station areas to guide our work in Phase 2 (see *Phase 1 Goals and Strategies*). Phase 2 was very focused on Interlocal deliverables #4 and #5—and therefore moved forward during time when many other Sound Transit—related issues did not come to resolution.

Phase 2 Accomplishments

- **City Policy.** Station Area Planning and Implementation measures upon which Council acted.
- **Outreach and Education.** Stakeholder education and public information on transit-oriented development, station area urban design and land use policy, including extensive SAAC activities.
- **Design Coordination and Project Review.** A large part of the SAP effort involved design coordination. The team worked with Sound Transit staff, other city staff, the Light Rail Review Panel (LRRP) and the SAACs on emerging light rail design issues, and to coordinate Sound Transit's project designs with planned or ongoing development and public works projects in neighborhoods. The SAP team worked with neighborhoods and Sound Transit to establish City and Sound Transit policies and site-specific approaches to transit oriented development, review of alignments and station location options, as well as design of light rail facilities.
- **Market Evaluation—Phase 2.** More specific market analysis to evaluate the demand for redevelopment and infill projects surrounding stations.

- **Geographic Specific Projects.** Master planning, street design activities and TOD feasibility analysis for specific projects and/or station areas.
- **TOD Policy.** TOD partnerships development, including TOD policy and program development at Sound Transit.

Steps in the Process

Station Area Kickoff Events. Kick-off events took place in March 1999 in north, central, downtown and southeast neighborhoods. The *On-Track Newsletter* advertised these events and was mailed to all residents, property owners, and businesses within a 1/2 mile of proposed stations in advance of the February/March 2000 Public Forums. The purpose of these events was to inform people about station area planning and described by transit-oriented development concepts. The SAP team described TOD as “development that happens around transit stations that encourages transit use.” It is pedestrian and bicycle-friendly—lively, mixed use development that is open after hours to encourage activity on the street past 5 p.m. People were reminded that transit-oriented development is not new to Seattle neighborhoods—it is happening in many of Seattle’s neighborhood centers and throughout downtown. In fact, it is what shaped our historic and cherished neighborhood business districts around early streetcar lines.

Establish Station Area Advisory Committees. Following each of the kick-off events in 1999, the City SAP staff assembled Station Area Advisory Committee’s (SAACs) comprised of community stakeholders and interested individuals to guide planning work for each station area. These volunteer groups, representing a broad cross-section of neighborhood interests, formed the core of station area planning in Phase 2. Each SAAC worked with City staff to prioritize station area planning actions. They also provided feedback to Sound Transit staff and their design consultants on details concerning station location, station design and development issues. Areas of discussion included land use/zoning/development incentives, housing, transportation, urban design, public safety, open space and economic development.

Station Area Workplans. The SAP geographic team leads developed workplans for each station area, working from neighborhood plans. The workplans were presented to SAACs for comments. The workplans provided background materials for the Design and Development Work Sessions and the Station Area Action Packages.

Design and Development Work Sessions. A series of community forums and work sessions took place in the summer of 1999. The [public forums](#) provided opportunities for each station area community to check-in with SAP efforts and Sound Transit’s progress with the development of the rail system. The work sessions were advertised with [newsletters](#) mailed to every resident, property owner and business within half mile of the proposed stations. These forums were followed immediately by week-long design and development work sessions that included City and Sound Transit staff, community representatives and design and development professionals. Work session teams developed draft urban design and development concept plans for station areas that were grounded in economic reality and responded to existing neighborhood conditions, opportunities and plans. The products of these work sessions were presented to the community in widely publicized [report out](#) sessions during which community members gave additional feedback to the City and Sound Transit. One benefit of the work sessions was an intense, focused effort that resulted in useable products including plans, illustrative sketches, photos, infrastructure strategies, and recommended revisions to land use regulations.

Action Packages. The SAP Action Packages were developed following the Design and Development Work Sessions in Fall 1999. Each Action Package includes a set of draft recommended actions for:

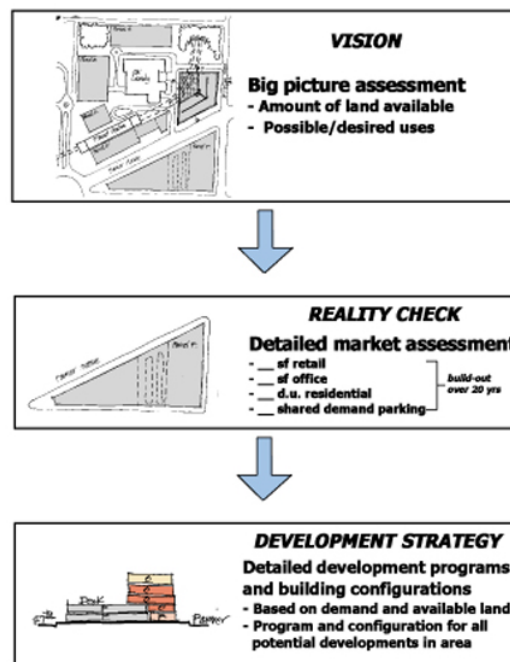
- transportation & access
- housing
- land use & zoning
- open space & capital facilities
- development opportunities

The actions reflected neighborhood plans and station area planning work sessions. They were conceived as working documents to change over time and as a tracking mechanism for City staff responsible for implementing station area actions. The Action Packages were regularly updated (and posted on the SAP web page) until the information contained in them was folded into the Concept-Level Station Area Recommendations adopted by Council in August 2000 ([Resolution #30165](#)), and the Neighborhood Plan Implementation Database and two-year sector implementation plans (see below).

Sound Transit Design Review. Although outside the scope of the SAP Interlocal Agreement and its deliverables, SAP staff took increasing responsibility for initiating, negotiating and working to resolve major Sound Transit design issues. This is especially true in coordination with the Light Rail Review Panel and SeaTran's designated project implementation manager. With the most knowledge of station area issues, the SAP team contributed to the review process for all Sound Transit design submittals (e.g. 30%, 60% and 90% completion).

SAP Initiatives. SAP team members advanced a number of geographic specific projects during the course of Phase 2. Brief descriptions of the SAP role on these projects follow.

- **McClellan Town Center Development Strategy:**
Starting in 2000, a team of community stakeholders, market analysts, urban designers, and transportation experts worked with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to explore a development strategy for a Town Center around the aerial light rail station in the North Rainier Valley. The City Council-adopted North Rainier Valley Neighborhood Plan envisioned a vital, mixed use Town Center that provides a focus for commercial, residential and transportation activities at the heart of the neighborhood. In September 2000, the City Council also adopted Concept-level Station Area Planning recommendations for this area, providing additional policy guidance for the Town Center effort. The McClellan Town Center Development Strategy was initiated by the City's Station Area Planning team to refine the neighborhood's vision. The strategy identifies a variety of commercial and housing development activities as well as public investments and design recommendations that will integrate the future McClellan light rail station into the commercial core of the neighborhood.



- **Othello Town Center:** The Othello Town Center planning effort was initiated by Seattle's SAP program in the Strategic Planning Office and co-sponsored by the MLK @ Holly Stewardship Group and Holly Park Merchants Association in 2001. The primary goal of this effort was to establish a design framework for a Town Center in the MLK@Holly neighborhood. This design framework will provide city agencies, community groups and local residents with a comprehensive record of ideas and intentions formulated throughout the planning process and guide the decision making process as individual steps to create the Town Center are undertaken in the future. In order to achieve this goal, the project sponsors retained an urban design and planning consultant to conduct the desired community involvement and to develop a Town Center design framework.
- **Southeast Seattle Market Analysis:** SAP staff and the Office of Economic Development (OED) worked with urban economics and real estate consultants to prepare a market analysis for use in station area planning for the six future LINK light rail stations that will be located in Southeast Seattle (Beacon Hill, McClellan, Edmunds, Graham, Othello, and Henderson). The market analysis looked at six land uses (retail, entertainment, office, multi-family residential, civic/arts, and education) and involved a review of existing materials; key informant interviews; quantitative analysis; and application of expert knowledge regarding transit-oriented development (TOD) and urban revitalization. The analysis outlines in detail demographic trends in Southeast Seattle; profiles the station areas; describes market conditions for the six land uses studied and the relationship of those uses to economic development and transit; identifies TOD opportunities in the station areas; makes recommendations regarding future studies and planning work and support for TOD; and describes potential gap financing resources.
- **McClellan Circle Roundabout Pre-design study:** A roundabout is being considered in the McClellan station area at the intersection of MLK Jr. Way South and Rainier Avenue South to address circulation, aesthetics and safety issues that have been raised by the city and the community. SAP staff is working with other City departments and the community to complete a pre-design study and determine if a roundabout at this intersection will accomplish three major goals of the Town Center vision:
 - To further the neighborhood's vision for a Town Center with a solid "sense of place"
 - To resolve travel modal conflicts at this major crossroads
 - To reconnect two Olmsted Boulevards that intersect at this location

The McClellan Town Center Advisory Committee, the North Rainier Neighborhood Stewardship Group, the Mt. Baker Community Club and business owners in the vicinity of the intersection are engaged in the pre-design study and working with the City and a roundabout design engineering expert to explore design alternatives for a roundabout. The pre-design study will be completed by December 2001.

- **Hope VI Redevelopment at Rainier Vista and NewHolly:** At the Othello and Edmunds station areas, design and development coordination was critical and complex due to the redevelopment of Seattle Housing Authority's (SHA) NewHolly and Rainier Vista mixed income residential communities. The SAP team led City staff participation in the design process and coordinated regulatory and public outreach activities to ensure compatibility among the Sound Transit and SHA projects, avoid redundancies, and make the best use of public investments.
- **First Hill TOD:** The First Hill community is engaged in discussions about development adjacent to the proposed First Hill station. City staff identified sites, commissioned feasibility studies, initiated

conceptual design, and led the community participation effort to ensure that the design of a light rail station on First Hill would contribute to a vibrant, walkable center of the neighborhood with new housing, retail, and open space.

- **Roosevelt Station Area Concepts:** The SAP team initiated master planning for the Roosevelt station area, including a \$70 million renovation of Roosevelt High School and environs.
- **Northgate LINK SEIS Review:** In Spring 2001, SAP staff led the city's review effort for Sound Transit's Preliminary Draft SEIS for Northgate Link. The study area covered the area from 45th Street in the University District to Northgate and included Roosevelt station area.
- **Northgate Community Workshops:** The SAP team participated in numerous regional events, such as the Northgate community workshop, which involved multiple agencies (King County, Washington State DOT, Sound Transit, City of Seattle), along with community members, developers and design professionals. The workshops resulted in concepts on how to maximize planned public and private investments to create a vibrant, mixed-use urban center at Northgate.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Capital Improvements:** SAP staff led the City's participation to optimize Sound Transit's design of on-street pedestrian and bicycle improvements in all station areas. By 2001, the City and Sound Transit reached agreement on Southeast station areas.
- **Convention Place Station TOD:** The most significant station area design coordination project in downtown is the Convention Place Station project: a partnership among King County/Metro, City of Seattle, and Sound Transit to redevelop a major transit center into a bus layover facility below grade with a high-rise mixed use development above. This project has the potential to meet many goals of the City and community members who live and work in the Westlake/Convention Place station area.

Land Use Legislation. The following summarizes City Council actions passed during SAP Phase 2. A [complete list](#) of all City of Seattle legislation related to Sound Transit is included on the accompanying CD ROM.

Resolution 30165, September 2000--adopted a [city-wide vision](#) for light rail and Concept-Level Station Area Planning Recommendations for [each station area](#). The Recommendations provide a conceptual vision and design for the neighborhoods served by rail and include:

- An illustrated vision statement
- A conceptual plan diagram
- A catalogue of tools that provide the vision and framework for public action and private investments.

Ordinances 120452-120460, July 2001—passed [enabling legislation](#) and a permanent [Station Area Overlay District \(SAOD\)](#) and rezones for [eight station areas](#). The land use regulation and zoning changes come directly from neighborhood plan recommendations, or translate broad visions and ideas from neighborhood plans. The elements of the Station Area Overlay District (SAOD) and rezones, when taken together, are intended to discourage auto-oriented development and increase opportunities for housing development near transit corridors where light rail stations are proposed. Consistent with the terms of the Interlocal Agreement and the need to implement policy direction for Neighborhood Planning, the City acted on these changes in underlying land use regulations.

Designating the Overlay District and enacting related rezones accomplished several SAP objectives:

- **Support existing businesses.** All existing legal businesses and uses are allowed to remain in station areas. Some uses made non-conforming by the Overlay or rezones are allowed a one-time expansion.
- **Prohibit new auto-oriented uses.** Certain new development is prohibited in station areas to encourage pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development.
- **Encourage pedestrian activity.** Designate Pedestrian Overlay zones that require parking to be underneath or behind new developments, and provide parking exemptions for small retail businesses on Principal Pedestrian Streets.
- **Encourage housing development.** Single-purpose residential structures are permitted outright in certain locations within the station area overlay districts. Also, a 64% upper-level coverage limit has been removed to encourage more housing without raising height limits.
- **By mapping the Station Area Overlay District boundaries, provide the framework for future incentives** and other measures to support walkable, active, mixed-use neighborhoods, such as reduced parking ratios, once light rail service is in place.

The final land use legislation was substantially revised from the version issued in June 2000, based on community comments and additional staff work. Staff prepared a series of [presentation boards](#) to illustrate these concepts and revisions.

Closing Out SAP. Sector Plans and the Neighborhood Plan Implementation (NPI) Database. Over the past two years, the SAP team has tracked individual station area action through our Action Packages. Some actions have been implemented, others have been combined into a more comprehensive planning strategy, and others remain outstanding. As Station Area Planning comes to a close, the SAP team, in partnership with staff at the City's Department of Neighborhoods (DON), has developed a system for recording and tracking SAP recommendations so they can be accessible to the community and other City staff. DON's Neighborhood Planning Implementation database is a useful tool for providing these updates. SAP recommendations fall into the following categories:

SAP Updates to Existing NPI Items: Many SAP recommendations come directly from Neighborhood Plans and are already included in the NPI database and tracked by the DON Neighborhood Development Managers. The NPI database allows a "Status Comments" field where a summary or response to the recommendation will be provided by the station area planner. For example, the University Community Urban Center plan recommends a key pedestrian connection along NE 43rd St from the UW Campus to the Ave. This recommendation was reflected in the SAP Concept-Level Recommendations and was included in Sound Transit's project. A key status update is the connection to the Ave Project for consistent urban design and public art treatments.

New SAP Activities in response to NPI Items: Other SAP recommendations are in response to neighborhood planning recommendations and are closely related to an NPI entry. These items may include refined work programs to implement a neighborhood planning recommendation. For these recommendations, the NPI database contains a "Sub-Activity Details" section to track more detailed work. For example initiated work initially described in the North Rainier Neighborhood Plan such as McClellan Town Center development strategy and roundabout study that are closely related to this neighborhood planning recommendation. The NPI database allows for a description of the activity and a status update.

New SAP Activities not covered by the NPI Database: For new issues that were developed in Station Area Planning, but were not a part of Neighborhood Planning, the NPI database allows new activities to be added. These activities will be listed as “ZSAP” items in place of a neighborhood plan matrix reference number. City/Sound Transit negotiations over pedestrian and bicycle access to stations is an example of a new SAP activity not currently included in the NPI database that will need to be referenced when the light rail project is implemented.

Tracking the Work: The NPI database is being used by City staff and citizens to track progress on neighborhood plan recommendations. While SAP has started to implement some neighborhood plan recommendations, others generated additional studies or work. Still other recommendations were discounted as being infeasible. Using the same tracking mechanism for Station Area Planning work keeps information in the same place and allows for institutional memory as SAP staff transition to other roles.

Phase 2 Products Included on the Closeout CD

- **SAP Brochures** describe objectives, status, and representative projects of the SAP program. Distributed at neighborhood drop-off centers and events. Posted on the web. Not mailed.
- **On-Track Newsletters.** Geographically-specific tabloid mailings produced at key points in developing SAP recommendations. Distributed widely and bulk mailed within ½ mile of stations.
- **SAP Legislation**
 - **Interim Overlay extensions.** Extended effective date while SAP final recommendations were developed. Also modified affected areas.
 - **Concept Level Recommendations.** Council adopted vision statements, conceptual plan diagram, and location—specific tools and strategies for public actions and private development.
 - **SAOD and Rezones.** New Land Use Code chapter creating permanent Overlay District. Rezones for eight station areas, and application of the Overlay District to those station areas.
- **McClellan Town Center** Development Strategy Final Report documents community and consultant process and preferred build out, including parcel-level feasibility.
- **Othello Town Center** Pamphlet summarizes the Othello Town Center planning process and describes a framework for future Town Center development.
- **Market Analysis** of Southeast Corridor Transit Station Areas. Comparative advantage analysis of Southeast Seattle/Rainier Valley Station Areas.
- **PowerPoint Presentations.** Representative sample presentations prepared for diverse audiences (e.g. decision-makers, public events, and technical sessions).
- **Northgate LINK Environmental Work.** Community discussions to date on Northgate Link alignment issues.
- **Flyers** and Notices of Webpage updates. Materials generated for public information to solicit input, and to report progress/revision of work products.

Seattle Station Area Planning Program Milestones

Year	Milestone
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Transit Project Study complete Seattle Comprehensive Plan adopted
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighborhood Planning begins (though 1999)
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voters approve Sound Move Plan
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound Transit and Seattle Planning Commission Light Rail Charettes
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue Phase 1 Consultant Request for Proposals Station Area Planning begins (Interlocal via Ordinance # 11892) Produced SAP Atlas and SAP Background Report Establish SAP Framework Goals and Strategies (Resolution # 29867) Mayor issues Housing Action Agenda Created SAP Transit-Oriented Development Work Group (with King County and PSRC) APA National Conference Charettes for Capitol Hill and Edmunds station areas with the Planning Commission
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hired Station Area Planners (3) Establish Interim Station Area Overlay Districts (Ordinance #119394) Station Area Planning Kick Off Events Establish community Station Area Advisory Committees (SAACs) Design and Development Work Sessions and Report Back meetings Modify Interim Station Area Overlay Districts (Ordinance #119672) Sound Transit Board selects preferred alternative from its Final EIS for Central Link Light Rail Co-sponsor first regional Transit-Oriented Development Forum Present work at Railvolution Conference in Dallas, Texas
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop draft Action Packages Modify and extend Interim Station Area Overlay Districts (Ordinances #119838, #119986, and #120039) City Council adopted Resolution 30128, approving the light rail alignment, station locations, and maintenance base location for Link Light Rail in Seattle. Establish McClellan Town Center Advisory Council Mayor and Council Briefings on Action Packages Present Action Packages/Station Area Concept-Level Recommendations at Community Forums Begin Roosevelt and Northgate Station Area Planning Ongoing community Station Area Advisory Committee meetings (SAACs) Develop SAP Land Use Legislation Proposal (Overlay and Rezones) Council adopts Station Area Concept-Level Recommendations (Resolution #30165) Public Hearings on SAP Land Use Legislation Proposal Co-sponsor second regional Transit-Oriented Development Forum

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal and Hearing Examiner Process on SAP Land Use Legislation • Establish Othello Town Center Advisory Council • Present work at Railvolution in Denver, CO • Comment on Sound Transit Northgate Segment A environmental work • Northgate Community Workshops
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the Interim Station Area Overlay Districts (Ordinance #120248) • Station Area Advisory Committee work handed off to neighborhood plan stewardship groups • Revise SAP Land Use Legislation Proposal to Address Community Concerns • Present Revised SAP Land Use Legislation Proposal at Community Open Houses • Finalize Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Commitments for Southeast Seattle Station Areas • McClellan Circle Roundabout Intersection Design Project • Public Hearing on revised SAP Land Use Legislation Proposal • Council adopts permanent Station Area Overlay Districts and Rezones (Ordinances #120452-120460) • Merge Station Area Planning Action Package items into Neighborhood Plan Implementation Database • Comment on Sound Transit system designs and ongoing environmental work • Northgate community workshop follow-up and project implementation

Summary of Outreach Activities

Station Area Planning conducted a wide array of outreach activities and interactive planning sessions. Beyond providing information, our outreach activities were also intended to:

1. inform Sound Transit design,
2. refine Neighborhood Plan visions, and
3. discuss issues key to the SAP program.

Representative products are provided in the accompanying CD and are linked to relevant sections of this report.

Meeting, Workshop and Public Hearing Attendance

Staff conducted 95 scheduled and publicized Station Area Advisory Committee meetings from February 1999 through March 2001. Staff also attended and participated in over two hundred other community meetings (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, Neighborhood Plan Stewardship, and other interest groups).

Station area planning open houses over the length of the program attracted over 800 attendees. Public hearings on SAP planning recommendations and proposed land use regulations attracted over 200 attendees. In addition, SAP staff conducted 150 interviews and/or focus groups with community stakeholders as part of the Design and Development Work Sessions. [Developer focus groups](#) were conducted with over 40 members of the development and financial community.

Notice for Public Events

Newsletters

Informational newsletters and postcards publicizing major SAP events were mailed to every resident, property and business owner within a half-mile of most stations. Over 81,000 mailed pieces were distributed over the course of the SAP program.

Open Houses and Public Hearings

Over 13,000 open house invitations were mailed (and 859 emails) to residents, property and business owners in the vicinity of station areas about revisions to the Land Use Code proposals.

These were followed by two rounds of over 13,000 legal notices each mailed to inform residents, property and business owners of the City Council's public hearing on the final land use proposals. These were mailed in advance of the first set of public hearings in June 2000 and the revised proposals in July 2001.

Press Releases and Display Ads in Neighborhood Newspapers

42 press releases were issued to local and neighborhood papers, 14 press releases to radio and TV stations, and translations for non-English radio broadcasts. Three ads were put in local community newspapers as well as 2 city-wide ethnic newspapers (one translated into Vietnamese) to advertise land use proposal open houses.

SAP Program Information Updates

Website and Email

A SAP Website with extensive information was created and regularly updated with events, Council actions, Station Area specific information, as well as pending legislation. On-line comment forms were available for citizen input on proposed land use regulations. E-mail updates were also sent regularly to community members about upcoming SAAC meetings, city-wide events and whenever new information was available. Our e-mail list consists of 859 people. A Station Area Spotlight email newsletter was periodically distributed to over 100 local elected officials and public agency directors.

Neighborhood Drop-off Centers

Documents were periodically distributed and updated at a total of 14 branch libraries, community service centers and other neighborhood sites. The documents included: Station Area profiles; Transit Oriented Development information; On-Track Newsletters (2 each of four neighborhood specific versions); Station Area Update Brochures (2); flyers and postcards publicizing the SAP website; Concept-level Station Area Planning Recommendations for each Station Area; and, 900 [pamphlets](#) of proposed Station Area Overlay Districts and Rezones.

Lessons Learned

1. **A good time to do Station Area Planning?** Seattle's Station Area Planning Program had a strong relationship with the Sound Transit light rail project. However, as Sound Transit responded to engineering and community issues related to Link Light Rail, their schedule changed and alignment decisions often occurred after SAP work had been started and neighborhoods were engaged in the discussions. The SAP team did its best to continue moving forward on land use and TOD related activities in station areas, but in many cases it was a situation of "too much too soon." For station area planning to be most successful, it is important that the community can focus on land use and TOD issues and not still have much up in the air regarding light rail alignments and station locations.

The SAP team based some of our TOD strategies, market analyses, and urban design work around properties Sound Transit would acquire for stations or construction staging. This was in advance of ST formalizing their TOD and real estate policies and did not consider outright acquisition of all station and staging area properties. This gave little certainty to the development community and elected officials and minimized the amount of TOD implementation the SAP team could accomplish during our program. However, the groundwork is laid for a time of greater certainty with ST's acquisitions.

2. **Take the train that's in the station.** It was important for the SAP team to move forward, to plan around a known set of variables in each station area. For this reason, the SAP geographic team members had to assess the approach for each station area individually. Similar to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs," it was nearly impossible to keep community members or elected officials focused on land use issues, mixed-use or mixed-income housing and TOD strategies absent definitive information on light rail alignments, station locations and property impacts.

It was important, and ultimately successful, to have a SAP team with a diversity of strengths. The team was assembled almost like a consultancy with the authority of a public agency. Staff was directed to "go with what you know" or "take the train that's in the station" because if we were to wait around for alignment and station decisions to be finalized in some areas, we never would have accomplished our tasks. In addition, some station area planners were working in areas where light rail planning was the most pressing issue while in other areas (e.g. Downtown Seattle and Northgate), planners had opportunities to merge SAP work with other City efforts. Some station areas progressed further than others with respect to TOD strategy and land use revisions. The final product of SAP for others (e.g., Capitol Hill) was a station area overlay district without any additional land use actions.

3. **There is a great difference between TOD strategy and a large scale engineering project.** It is important when working with a partner agency to clearly define roles at the outset of the project and have good channels for communication when expectations are not being met. The SAP team was focused on making the most of the light rail investment for neighborhoods in Seattle. Sound Transit needed to focus on their engineering project to meet the voters mandate and keep to an aggressive schedule and budget. Without clear expectations or discipline about agency roles, especially regarding community outreach and involvement, the SAP team took on an unexpected amount of work especially with community groups. This role was germane to our work and critical to the success of the light rail project, although it did not appear to have the same priority within the engineering project itself.

We filled gaps that we felt needed filling to make the project and process successful, but at what cost? The City's Station Area Advisory Committees were the only organized mechanism for ongoing community involvement related to the Sound Transit project and Station Area Planning. Consequently, many of the SAAC meetings were frequently focused on Sound Transit related issues, which slowed down the amount of progress the SAP team could make on our own program goals. Our strategy was to keep moving forward, keep our eyes on the prize and complete our SAP program objectives to the best of our ability, while the engineering project took various twists and turns.

4. **The post-neighborhood planning environment.** The post-neighborhood planning environment in Seattle was a given for our team. After four years of neighborhood groups working diligently to produce neighborhood plans, the SAP team was faced with community groups experiencing serious levels of both burnout and raised expectations. We spent time with community groups making the distinction between Neighborhood Planning and SAP processes. The community was emboldened,

empowered and otherwise enabled by Neighborhood Planning to have a voice in the SAP process which had its merits and challenges. Different from neighborhood planning, SAP was primarily staff led with community input, as opposed to neighborhood planning having been community led with consultant and some staff resources. This allowed the community to be participants but not be required to complete the program, as in neighborhood planning. If you don't have a neighborhood planning process to build on, you may not get as far with SAP. You may only get as far as establishing a vision and goals for station areas as opposed to identifying specific urban design strategies, rezones or capital project needs.

5. **Separate news from reporting.** People have been angry about Sound Transit and the media focused on the general disappointment with every article they wrote regarding the light rail project. Everything in the news related to Sound Transit was spun with negativity. We accomplished our SAP goals, many of which were controversial on their own merits (rezones, overlays, etc.) and often felt like the SAP baby got thrown out with ST bath water. The team had to separate news from reporting to try and keep the "glass half full." The SAP team was often left to report to the community or to facilitating Sound Transit's efforts to report to the community. We tried to respond to misinformation for both Sound Transit and the City and often had to distinguish between providing information and being a press bureau for Sound Transit.
6. **Capitalize on elected official interests.** Beyond the one City Council member who sits on the Sound Transit Board, Council members were engaged but not directly responsible for decision making on the Sound Transit project. Council was committed to a vision for neighborhoods including TOD. They had critical distance from the Sound Transit project, and could support SAP activities. This situation proved extremely helpful getting legislation related to TOD and SAP goals heard by the Council and ultimately approved. The interest of elected officials also had an effect on accessibility of council members to community groups. Council members frequently attended SAAC meetings, engaged in brown bag lunch sessions and provided SAP staff with plenty of briefing time on their busy agendas. Since Seattle City Council meetings are publicized on public access cable television, our numerous council briefings had the added benefit of creating another outlet to raising awareness about SAP progress with council members and the viewing public.
7. **SAP is a planning program, not a development agency.** Keep in mind that you can only go so far with a SAP program as time, regulations and funding allows. Be realistic about results from SAP and make sure to have a place in mind where the program stops and other established programs carry on. In our case, we found a home for policies, programs and resources furthered during the SAP program in the DON NPI database and sector plans. Additional activities for Southeast Seattle that may apply to the Community Development Fund will be included in those discussions with the CDF steering committee. Individual projects can be moved to the next phases of implementation by City staff when the timing is right or when funding allows (e.g. neighborhood transit centers, capitol project development, business retention and public works permitting).

SAP Alumni: Past and Present Members of the Strategic Planning Office's Station Area Planning Team

Program Leads

Stephen Antupit, Urban Design (1997-2001)
Carla Main, Community Development (1998-2001)

Station Area Planners

Calvin Chow (1999-2001)
Amy Glenn (2000-2001)
Barbara Gray (1999-2001)
Kevin O'Neill (2000-2001)
David Goldberg (1999-2000)
Trang Tu (1999-2000)
Jory Phillips, Assistant Planner (2000)

Communications Officers

Therese Casper (2000-2001)
Jemae Pope (1999-2000)
Mary Diggs-Hobson (1998)

Administration and Contracts

Esther Wilson, Administrative Assistant (1998-2001)
Mahnaz Eshetu, Contracts & Administration (2001)
Jane Morris, Contracts & Administration (1999-2001)
Nora Paille, Contracts & Administration (1997-1998)

Consultants

Planning, Urban Design, Architecture and Transportation Consultants

Alternate Street Design, Inc.
Dyett & Bhatia
GGLO Architects
Hewitt Architects
MAKERS
Murase Associates
Nakano Landscape Architects
NBBJ Architects
Pittman & Hames
Sienna Architects
Urban Works
Weinstein Copeland Architects

Market Analysis, Economics, and Real Estate Consultants

Barrientos LLC
Bay Area Economics
Berk & Associates
ECONorthwest
Heartland
Leland and Associates
Pollack & Company
Sedway Group

Communications, Graphic Design and Other Consultants

Cedar River Associates
Design Analysis Graphic Design
Pacific Rim Resources
SirenSong Productions
TELEOS design